

NORTH CAROLINA HUMAN TRAFFICKING COMMISSION Meeting Minutes
August 27, 2020, 10:00am-12:00pm
Meeting Conducted by WebEx* through the NC Judicial Center

Commission Members in Attendance by Video or Phone:

Danielle Carman, Administrative Office of the Courts
Judge Claire Hill, NC Conference of Superior Court Judges
Jennifer Haigwood, NC Department of Labor
Caitlin Brooks, Public-at-Large
Tammy Harris, The Ursus Institute
Deana Joy, NC Child Advocacy Center
Jasmine McGhee, NC Department of Justice
Caitlin Ryland, Legal Aid of North Carolina
Angelica Wind, NC Coalition Against Human Trafficking
Suzanne Mauney Smith, Gaston County Police (exited meeting at 10:20am)
Thomas Bernard, Wake Med
William M. Nichols, Ret. Major NC Highway Patrol
Pam Cashwell, NC Department of Public Safety (entered meeting at 10:20am)
William West Jr., District Attorney

Commission Staff Present by video or phone:

Christine Long, Executive Director
Dr. Nancy Hagan, Training Coordinator

*Members of the public were invited to watch the meeting and access meeting materials through a stream provided on the website.

Call to Order and Roll Call:

The Chair called the meeting to order and read the following State Government Ethics Act reminder:

- In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every North Carolina Human Trafficking Commission (HTC) member to avoid conflicts of interest. If any HTC member has any known conflict of interest in respect to any matter coming in front of the HTC, they must identify the conflict and refrain from any participation in the particular matter involved.

Approval of the Minutes: June 27, 2020

Due to new public meeting requirements for virtual meetings during the pandemic, the motion to approve the June 27, 2020 meeting minutes was approved through a roll-call vote. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Chair Remarks:

Chair Haigwood announced that the committees have been hard at work and thanked everyone for their participation. Chair Haigwood introduced Beth Rodman who is Bureau Chief for Agricultural Safety and Health with the N.C. Department of Labor which is responsible for inspecting migrant housing.

Chair Haigwood discussed the past three human trafficking trainings. She specifically wanted to thank Christine Long, Nancy Hagan, and Commissioner Marc Nichols for their help with these. She also recognized and thanked the hard work of the interns who helped Nancy and Christine.

Committee Reports and Action Items:

Public Health Committee:

Committee Chair Bernard discussed efforts being made to create human trafficking training modules for health care workers. The committee will be evaluating different trainings and the effectiveness of these over the next few weeks in order to decide which ones will be most effective for North Carolina. Committee Chair Bernard announced that Erika Powell, a contractor hired by the Commission, will review and compile information regarding best options. They will meet again within the next month to look at different options and bring these before the commission when they have decided.

Legislative Committee:

Committee Chair Brooks reported that the August 10 legislative committee meeting went well and that the committee has been very busy. She discussed N.C.G.S. 50-13.1 and the loophole that exists within this. District Court Judge Sarah Lanier brought this to the commission's attention and is working with committee members on a proposed solution. Committee Chair Brooks pointed out that within the child welfare system, there are checks and balances in place to ensure safety of children, however, this is lacking in domestic cases. She wanted to bring this issue to the commission to see if they could move forward in drafting legislation for a solution. Both D.A. West and Judge Hill stated that they would be in support of writing legislation in order to close the loophole.

Committee Chair Brooks announced that they will be having legislative committee in between full commission meetings.

Public Safety Committee:

Committee Chair Marc Nichols updated the commission on the progress the committee is making on creating a public awareness video. They held their own webinar and have been reviewing different videos to figure out which one will be the most impactful and

effective. They will be using the public awareness grant to create a video that will be finished by September 30.

Appropriations Committee:

Chair Haigwood reported that out of the 13 grants the commission awarded, nine have closed. Four have received extensions but are on track to close at the end of December. The appropriations committee has scheduled a meeting to consider what to do with the remaining grant funds. When they have a recommendation, they will bring it before the commission. Chair Haigwood said that this will hopefully be before the end of September.

Ad Hoc Committee on Standards:

Chair Haigwood announced that the committee will remain dormant for the immediate future, as no one has expressed interest in heading the committee and no committee work is necessary at this time.

Staff Report:

Executive Director Long discussed the training and technical assistance grant that allowed Nancy Hagen to be hired. This grant also contains a contract for someone to help with technical assistance. Executive Director Long presented a slideshow presentation and discussed the human trafficking ad campaign.

Presentation: Human Trafficking and Natural Disasters

Nancy Hagen presented a power point and explained the impact of natural disasters on human trafficking. Victims of natural disasters who may be displaced and lack income and adequate resources can become vulnerable to human trafficking. Nancy Hagen then introduced three organizations that help combat issues that may lead to human trafficking.

Elizabeth Hunter from The Salvation Army discussed the support their organization provides during natural disasters. In addition, The Salvation Army offers outreach services to families and individuals in communities and those experiencing homelessness by providing aid with basic needs items, such as food, hygiene, and transportation. The Salvation Army also connects families to legal, vocational, family advocacy and case management services in collaboration with shelters, housing programs, and other service providers. Providing basic resources to individuals is likely to decrease the vulnerability to be trafficked.

The Farmworker Advocacy Network is an organization with the goal to improve living and working conditions of farmworkers in North Carolina. They advocate for workers' rights and seek to raise awareness about child labor in North Carolina.

Nicole Bernard from the North Carolina Coalition Against Human Trafficking (NCCAHT) spoke of the efforts they are also making in regard to human trafficking and natural disasters in N.C. NCCAHT is a coalition of committed members collaborating in knowledge and practice to provide leadership and support across the state to eradicate human trafficking in North Carolina.

Resolution: Continued Presence

Commissioner Ryland presented the Commission resolution on the broad usage of continued presence by all North Carolina law enforcement agencies to combat human trafficking. The resolution was circulated to members prior to the meeting.

After member discussion regarding certain language within the resolution, the Commission voted unanimously through roll call in support of adopting the resolution.

Adjournment:

At 12:07 pm the meeting was adjourned by Chair Haigwood. The next meeting will be held on October 22, 2020.

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